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Finland
Post Report

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Finland's 60,000 lakes provide important waterways and logfloating routes. These waterways, combined with Finland's vast forests, serve to create small communities and inspire a national culture.

Table of Contents

1 **The Host Country**
1 Area, Geography, and Climate
1 Population
2 Public Institutions
3 Arts, Science, and Education
4 Commerce and Industry
6 Transportation
7 Communications
8 Health and Medicine
9 Employment for Spouses and Dependents

11 **American Embassy**
11 Helsinki
11 The Post and Its Administration
12 Housing
13 Food
14 Clothing
15 Supplies and Services
15 Religious Activities
15 Education
18 Recreation and Social Life
20 Official Functions

21 **Notes For Travelers**
21 Getting to the Post
21 Customs, Duties, and Passage
22 Firearms and Ammunition
22 Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures
22 Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property
23 Recommended Reading
24 Local Holidays

This is the official post report prepared by the post. The information contained herein is directed to official US Government employees and their families. Any other information concerning the facts as set forth herein is to be regarded as unofficial information.

Preface

Finland offers the joys that communion with nature yields. The Finnish character—as a nation and as a people—has been forged by the severity of life in this northern corner of Europe, the challenge of being between contending powers, and the influence of lakes and forests which separate the country into small communities even as they serve to inspire a national culture.

Finnish pride focuses on Finnish independence and the modern, industrialized, democratic Finnish state which accommodates both a generous social welfare system and a vigorous individualism. To Finns, being close to nature is an everyday occurrence: The freedom of the forests is guaranteed by law, and there they pick berries, gather mushrooms, fish, hunt, ski, and swim. Americans are quick to take advantage of the healthy outdoor activities available in Finland.

Helsinki is the second most northerly capital in the world, after Reykjavik. Seasonal changes in Finland are dramatic, and the country is noted for its thousands of lakes, great forests, and rocky islands. Short winter days contrast with the summer's "white nights." In addition to its wealth of unspoiled scenery, Finland offers medieval churches, ancient culture, and modern, progressive cities. Finland also offers the intellectual challenge of learning its language.

Cover: Finlandia Hall with Parliament and the National Museum behind it.

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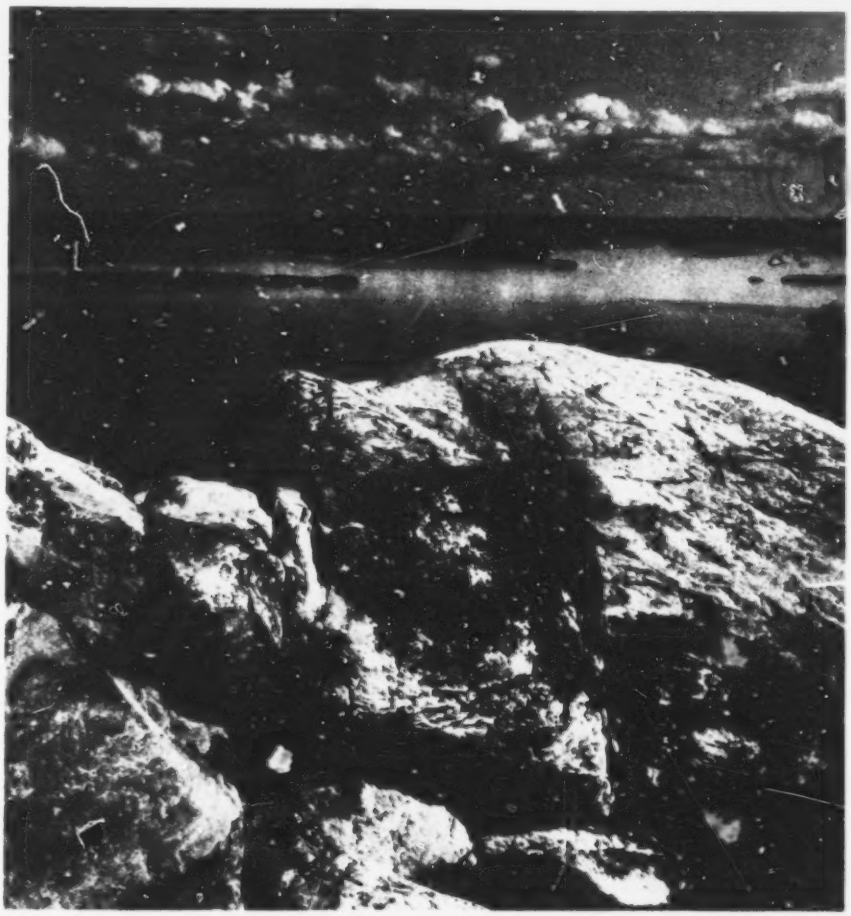
The Host Country

Area, Geography, and Climate

Finland, the sixth largest country in Europe, occupies an area of 338,312 square kilometers—about twice the size of the United Kingdom. Its coastline, excluding indentations, is 1,100 kilometers long. Finland is bordered on the east and southeast by the USSR, on the west by Sweden and the Gulf of Bothnia, on the north by Norway, and on the south by the Gulf of Finland. Most of the country is low but not necessarily flat. Because the soil, mainly moraine deposits from ice age glaciers, is very thin, the topography reflects the contours of the archean bedrock. Elevations greater than 650 meters are found along the northwestern frontier with Norway and in the extreme northern region of Lapland. The majority of Finland's 60,000 lakes, comprising 10% of the total area, lie in the southern half of the country and provide important waterways and logfloating routes. An extensive and imposing archipelago, extending from the Russian border on the south westward to the Aland Islands and there northward, provides an important fishing and vacation area also noted for its magnitude and grandeur. Another impressive physical feature and natural resource of Finland is its forest, covering about 65% of the land area (the highest percentage in Europe). The forests of Finland are mainly coniferous; a limited area in the south and southwest contains hardwood deciduous trees. In Lapland the spruce and pines disappear and dwarf birch usually forms the timber line.

Virtually all of Finland lies between latitudes 60°N and 70°N, but the Gulf Stream current and the prevalence of warm westerly winds make the climate several degrees warmer than the average elsewhere at the same latitude. Summers are short and mild and the days are long. In June and July only a 2-3 hour period of twilight separates sunset from sunrise. In the extreme north, the sun does not set for 73 days during the midsummer period.



Most of Finland's topography is low, but not necessarily flat. Rocks, forests, and water are seen here from the highest point in northern Karelia.

Precipitation, averaging 23-25 inches annually, is distributed over all seasons of the year. Winters are long and cold. Snow is possible from October through April, with January through March having the heaviest accumulations. Temperatures may vary from north to south, as does the snow coverage from one winter to the next.

Because of Helsinki's location on the Gulf of Finland, the humidity level there is high. The city's average temperature is +5°C. February and July mean temperatures are −5°C and +17°C, respectively. Average temperatures in Lapland are −12°C in January and +17°C in July.

Population

Finland's population of about 4.8 million includes some 2,500 Lapps. Since World War II a rapid industrialization, the growth of service industries, and expanded educational opportunities have fostered a movement of people from rural areas to urban centers. Finland has two official languages—Finnish and Swedish. Under the constitution the government must meet equally the cultural and economic requirements of both language groups. Finnish is spoken by 94% of the population and Swedish by 17%. But only 6% of the latter is the true Swedo-Finn minority. Finland

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Turku, Finland's capital until 1812, is located on the southern coast bordering the Gulf of Bothnia.

also has a small Lapp-speaking minority. The local school curriculum, especially at the secondary level, emphasizes foreign language study. The most widely spoken foreign languages are English and German. English-speaking visitors to Finland will have little difficulty communicating in Helsinki.

Public Institutions

King Eric of Sweden introduced Christianity to Finland in 1155. For 300 years the Catholic Church was influential, but during the Reformation the Protestant religion became predominant. Today some 90.5% of the population belong to the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church, the state church. The Finnish Orthodox congregation, with 1.2% of the population as members, is also a state church but it owes allegiance to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. Finland has complete freedom of worship, and several smaller church organizations have congregations totaling about 8.3% of the population. Bishops of the eight dioceses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church are appointed by the President of the Republic on the basis of elections held in each diocese. The bishop of the Diocese of Turku is the Archbishop of the Church of Finland.

Historically, Finland was controlled for long periods of time by both Sweden and Russia. From its first conquests in the 12th century until the surrender of Finland to Russia in 1809, Sweden ruled. Then, Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia. Finland, nevertheless, retained its old constitution, government, laws, and administration. A growing sentiment on the part of the Russians to absorb Finland and an increasing awareness of their distinct character and spirit on the part of the Finns led to the creation of an independent Finland in 1917 amid the chaos of the Russian Revolution. The immediate result of this proclamation of independence was a 3-month civil war between the "Reds" and the eventually victorious "Whites." A new constitution was proclaimed in 1919.

During World War II, Finland twice fought the Soviet Union: in the Winter War of 1939–40, and again in the Continuation War of 1941–44. Finland suffered heavy casualties and lost 11% of its territory to the Soviet Union. Over 400,000 Finns had to be resettled. The Treaty of Peace between Finland and the USSR, signed in Paris on February 10, 1947, provided for the cession to the Soviet Union of the Petsamo area on the Arctic coast and the Karelian Isthmus in southeast Finland, for the lease of the Porkkala area near Helsinki to the USSR for use as a naval base, and for free access to this area across Finnish territory. In late 1955 the Soviets returned the Porkkala area to Finland. The treaty also provided that Finland pay the USSR reparations in goods valued at an estimated $570 million (completed in 1952). Finland's defense forces are limited by the Peace Treaty to 41,900 troops (army 34,400; navy 4,500; air force 3,000).

In April 1948 Finland and the USSR signed an Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, by which Finland is obligated to resist armed attacks by Germany or its allies against Finland or against the USSR through Finland, with, if necessary, the aid of the Soviet Union. At the same time, the agreement recognizes, in its preamble, the Finnish desire to remain outside great power conflicts. This agreement was extended for 20 years in 1955 and again in 1970.

In the UN, which it joined in 1955, Finland favors membership for all nations, usually takes no stand on major East-West issues, stresses neutrality as a policy of active participation in international life, and channels the bulk of its foreign assistance to developing countries through various UN agencies. Finland supports and actively participates in the UN's peacekeeping activities.

Finland's official policy of neutrality and nonalignment has led to the establishment of relations with other countries regardless of their political systems. Finland worked for the convening of the Conference on European Security and Cooperation in July 1973, involving the USSR, countries of Eastern and Western Europe, Canada, and the US. This conference culminated in a summit meeting of 35 heads of state and the signing of the Final Act—often called the Helsinki Accords—on August 1, 1975. Finland has also supported the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, which began in Helsinki in 1969. In the Nordic Council, an interparliamentarian organ of

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The Foreign Ministry from the Cathedral steps.

board. Children aged 5 through 14 (kindergarten through 8th grade) are eligible for enrollment. Children who will be 5 during the first school term are usually accepted. Exceptions to this policy are decided at the discretion of the principal and the school board. The school is made up of six classes with an average size of 16 students each. Within each class is an approximate 2-year chronological age span. The school curriculum is based on American and British standards, and the full-time staff consists of American and British teachers. The school has initiated a joint accreditation process with the New England Association of Schools and the European Council of International Schools. The school recently moved to new premises at Makelankadun ylaaste, Hattulantie 2, 00550 Helsinki 55.

The International School comprises one wing of an established Finnish school and can take advantage of some of the Finnish teachers at this school for music, crafts, and physical education, etc. Extracurricular activities are also offered after school. Bus transportation is available, and the school fees and bus fees along with the tuition are within the authorized allowances. Additional information can be obtained from the Office of Overseas Schools or from the school at the above address.

The English School is an institution which receives support from the Finnish Government since it is primarily intended for Finnish students who wish to learn/maintain English. About 450 students are enrolled, of which some 10% are non-Finnish/Swedish students. Classes range from kindergarten through junior high school equivalent. There is normally a waiting list and you should contact the school as early as possible to insure enrollment. Additional information can be obtained from the post administrative officer or from the school. Contact Sister Renee Brinker, Principal, Mantytie 14, 00270 Helsinki 27. Private bus transportation is not available to this school. Tuition fees are covered by the post education allowance.

A small private French school, L'Ecole Francaise d'Helsinki, is run by the French Embassy. Schooling is assured for all ages including kindergarten and follows the studies set down by the French Ministry of Education. The staff is composed of French teachers provided by the French Government or recruited locally. The school occupies part of a building of a Finnish school situated in Munkkivuori, northwest of Helsinki. Enrollment, about 30 children of various nationalities, is open to any French-speaking family. Lunch is provided by the Finnish canteen. School tuition fees are covered by the education allowance. Private bus transportation is not available.

The German School, long established in Helsinki, offers kindergarten through high school, leading to a choice of either a German or a Finnish high school diploma. The school is West German oriented and has a reputation for giving its students a very good education. The teachers are mostly Germans with a few Finns; instruction is entirely in German. Books and materials, from Germany, are up to date and attractively presented. The school is a part of the Finnish school system with similar holidays, number of schooldays, and regulations. The staff welcomes children with no knowledge of German in the first few grades but generally discourages those who are at higher levels from entering due to the difficulty of catching up to classmates in the language. No Embassy children currently attend the German school.

Finnish- and Swedish-language public schools accept foreign students. Beginning school age is 7. A few Em-

cooperation among Nordic nations, Finland works closely with its Scandinavian neighbors on matters of intra-Nordic concern.

Today Finland is a Western-oriented republic. Under the constitution of 1919, the President, elected for a term of 6 years, has powers stronger than those of his counterparts in most European countries, although not as great as those of the President of the US. The President has full powers over foreign affairs, is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and can dissolve Parliament.

The Cabinet includes the Prime Minister and ministers and associate ministers in charge of the 11 government departments. The Parliament (Eduskunta) is unicameral and consists of 200 members directly elected every 4 years through proportional representation. Suffrage is equal and universal; all citizens over age 18 have the right to vote. Finland was the first country in Europe to grant full political rights to women (1906), well before the US.

Finnish policies on most basic domestic and foreign issues have been consistent, notwithstanding a relatively rapid turnover of cabinets since World War II and periods when no government commanded a parliamentary majority.

Eight political parties are represented in Parliament. Most Finnish governments are coalitions of several parties, although at times it has been necessary to form cabinets composed of nonparty technical experts. The average life of Finnish cabinets has been 12 months. By contrast, Finland has had only three presidents since 1946.

Justice is administered by independent courts. The public courts of justice try both civil and criminal cases. In rural areas, courts of the first instance are known as circuit courts, the judicial authority resting in a legally trained judge and a jury of 5–12 lay members. Cities have municipal courts, each presided over by a legally trained magistrate and two counselors. Other courts are the Courts of Appeal and the highest judicial authority, the Supreme Court, to which appeals may be made against the judgments of the Courts of Appeal.

Judicial procedure differs from that in Anglo-Saxon countries: Finnish law is codified and does not provide for habeas corpus or bail. Formal charges must be brought within the first 7 days of detention on suspicion, and in practice charges are usually brought within 3–4 days. Courts of first instance must hear a case within 30 days of arrest. Civil rights are deeply entrenched and strictly observed by the police and courts.

Arts, Science, and Education

Much of the richness of Finnish culture derives from the folk element. A wealth of songs, buildings, costumes, and traditions has been carefully preserved over the years. Finnish literature in its oldest form is comprised of the epic poems and tales passed from generation to generation by word of mouth. Since the first half of the 19th century a determined effort has been made to preserve the Finnish national culture through creation of a Finnish-language literature. Many of the resulting literary masterpieces, both in poetry and prose, reflect a historical context and regional spirit.

Finnish architecture is justly famous, from the earliest achievements seen in medieval castles through the elaborate wooden buildings of the 18th century to the innovative and functional design prevalent today. Alvar Aalto (1898–1976), the modern Finnish architect, influenced urban and regional planning, interior decoration, and industrial art.

In the fields of music, painting, and sculpture are found many fine examples of Finnish genius. Glass (Iittalla, Nuutajarvi, Humppila, etc.), porcelain (Arabia), textiles (Marimekko, Vuokko, and Pentik), jewelry (Lapponia and Kalevala Koru), and furniture (Alvar Aalto and Ilmari Tapiovaara) are some of the many items that bear the unique stamp of Finnish handiwork and design.

Finland, with virtually no illiteracy, has an advanced educational system which is free and includes all textbooks and a broad medical care program. In addition, pupils receive a hot lunch daily. Special schools have been established in the larger cities for children who are handicapped or have learning disabilities. Four basic levels comprise the school system: preschool education, compulsory education (the 9-year comprehensive school), upper secondary education, and the universities and similar institutions.

Hvittrask, now a museum and restaurant, served as home and studio to Finnish architects Eliel Saarinen, Armas Lindgren, and Herman Gesellius.

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Helsinki's south harbor provides ferry links to Germany, Sweden, and the USSR.

Finland has a strong state-subsidized adult education program with classes held at community schools or workers' institutes. This program supplements and/or completes the basic education and provides for advanced vocational training or cultural and intellectual pursuits.

The largest university is the state-supported University of Helsinki which has spearheaded the country's intellectual life since the 17th century. The Institute of Technology located at Otaniemi in Espoo is another well-known state school of higher education. State-supported higher education facilities have undergone major expansion since 1958. Eighteen university-level institutions and three art schools are now found throughout Finland, with the facilities in Helsinki, Turku, Tampere, Oulu, and Jyvaskyla representing the largest.

Commerce and Industry

Finland is a modern industrial state ranking among the 20 wealthiest countries in the world. This achievement is notable in that it has taken place in a relatively short period of time and in the face of difficult obstacles. At the foundation of the republic, the country was essentially an undeveloped, remote province of Russia. From that inauspicious beginning the country has made a dramatic leap to the front ranks of the technologically advanced countries.

Finland's economy is mixed, with state-owned firms competing with private ones in many sectors and in some instances enjoying a monopoly, most notably the production and sale of alcoholic beverages, the importation and refining of petroleum, and the postal and telegraph system. The term competition is stressed since the state operates its enterprises on a profitmaking basis and does not provide support for ailing public or private firms, letting the marketplace determine the course of industrial development.

Finland's current economic situation is good considering the general recession throughout most of Europe. The Finns attribute this success to tight management of the national economy from the top, while allowing actual business decisions to be made at the corporate level. Some figures illustrate the present state of affairs: GNP grew by 5.3% in 1980 and 1.5% in 1981 and is expected to increase by 2% in 1982; unemployment is high at over 6%, but it seems to have peaked; inflation should fall below 10% in 1982; and the balance of payments on current account will yield a surplus in the same year, giving evidence of Finland's remarkable export performance in the face of a slack foreign market and rising domestic costs.

Finland's main economic force is its manufacturing sector, principally the forest industry and the metals/engineering industry. Agriculture is pursued only in terms of maintaining minimal self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs. The service sector is becoming more important, particularly in technical services related to its main manufacturing industries; e.g., Finnish technology is the leader in the pulp and paper industry. The infrastructure for

Since harbors remain open even during winter, icebreakers often must lead small freighters into port.

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this modern industrial economy is sufficient and not excessive to its needs.

Agricultural workers comprise about 12% of the population. Finnish farms are small scale, with farmers receiving 43% of their income from milk products, 29% from meat, and 13% from grain. Since most farms contain large areas of forest lands, farmers also receive additional income from the sale of timber and through logging work. Production of crops such as rye, barley, oats, potatoes, sugarbeets, and vegetables is sufficient to satisfy domestic consumption, except for sugar, of which about 50% is imported. Finland is over 100% self-sufficient in dairy product production and a net exporter of dairy products.

Fishing is an important source of food production. Baltic herring is the most profuse species, but salmon, pike, sea trout, and whitefish are also found.

Finland's foreign trade reflects its basic economic constraint, a lack of raw materials. Imports are mainly fuel, metals, chemicals, and industrial agricultural products. Machinery imports are also important, but they are more than matched by export of machinery. Products of the forest industry have traditionally been the backbone of Finland's exports, but this is changing. Ships are another main Finnish export, especially icebreakers and vessels that can operate in heavy ice conditions. Other exports are fur pelts, clothing, shoes, and glassware. Finland's exports in 1982 are expected to surpass $15 billion and imports to be just under that amount. Trade with the US is flourishing, having doubled in the period 1979–81, and is estimated to top $1.8 billion in 1982. Finland's main trading partner is the Soviet Union which accounts for about 25% of Finland's trade.

Finland is an active proponent of free trade, not surprising since, given its small, stable population, its future economic growth lies in trade with other countries. It is an associate member of EFTA (European Free Trade Association) and GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), and has a free trade agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC) for manufactured goods. In addition, Finland has bilateral trade and payment agreements with the Soviet Union and seven other member countries of CEMA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). In keeping with the GATT, multilateral treatment is given to trade with countries not members of the free trade agreements, which in practice means that most-favored-nation status is accorded to almost all countries. The result of these relationships is that duties on manufactured goods have been largely abolished, and some 85% of all imports are duty free.

The ubiquitous sauna, preferably located on a cool lake in the forest, is an important part of Finnish life.

Finland has become increasingly active in foreign assistance programs and is a member of the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the Asian Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank. The country aims to raise its official development assistance flow to 0.7% of GDP by 1990.

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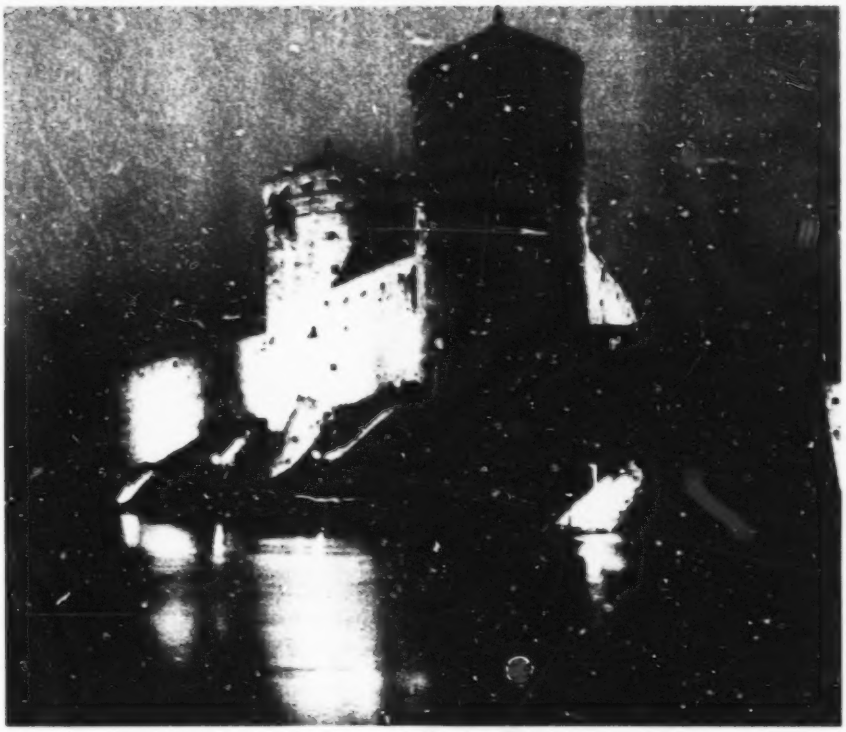
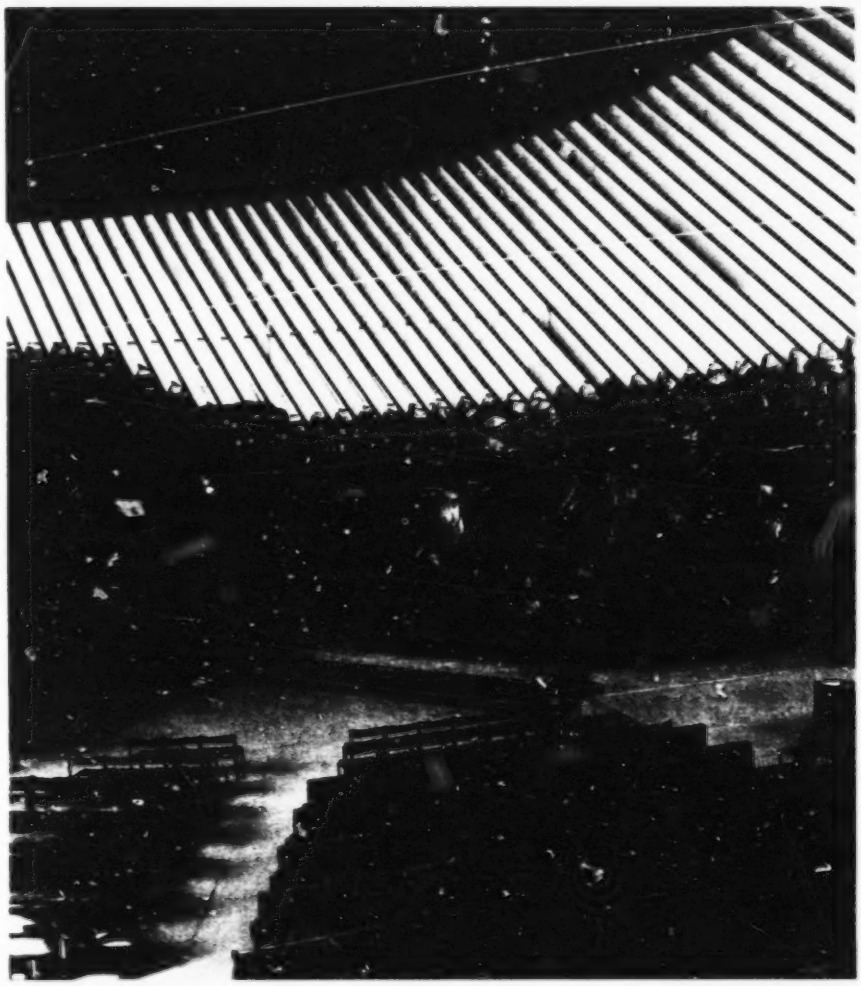


meet Finnish safety standards. Cars with US specifications normally require changes in the lighting system and the addition of mud flaps. Costs can run from $150–$200. Catalytic converters should be removed, as lead-free gasoline is not available in Finland.

Third-party liability insurance is mandatory and must be purchased locally. The General Services Office can arrange for coverage which is unlimited for personal injury and limited to FIM 675,000 for property damage. The basic cost of coverage is about $300. A statement from your former insurance company as to the number of years of accident-free driving will reduce your premium.

Drivers licenses and automobile registration plates are issued gratis from the Foreign Office. A US drivers license is valid for 3 months from the date of arrival in Finland. This valid license is used to obtain the Finnish

Savonlinna Castle (above) is the scene of the annual Opera Festival. The "Church in the Rock" (right) holds concerts as well as church services.



Transportation

Automobiles

All staff members may import a car duty free. The Foreign Office, upon request, may authorize importation of a second vehicle duty free based on demonstrated need. A car imported duty free may be sold without taxes after it has been in the country for 3 years. The Foreign Office reserves the right to refuse permission to sell a second car before leaving Finland. Ship your car to Finland to arrive as soon as possible. The date your car is registered determines the 3-year eligibility for sale duty free. Most cars purchased new at the time of arrival and sold after 3 years sell for about the initial purchase price. Duty-free cars may be bought in Finland. Prior to registration, which must be done within 2 weeks of the car's arrival in Finland, a car must pass inspection and be insured. Inspection costs about FIM 50, and an appointment can be arranged through the General Services Office. Cars must

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drivers license. Otherwise you must take a driving test. If you are 45 years old or over, you must also have a medical examination.

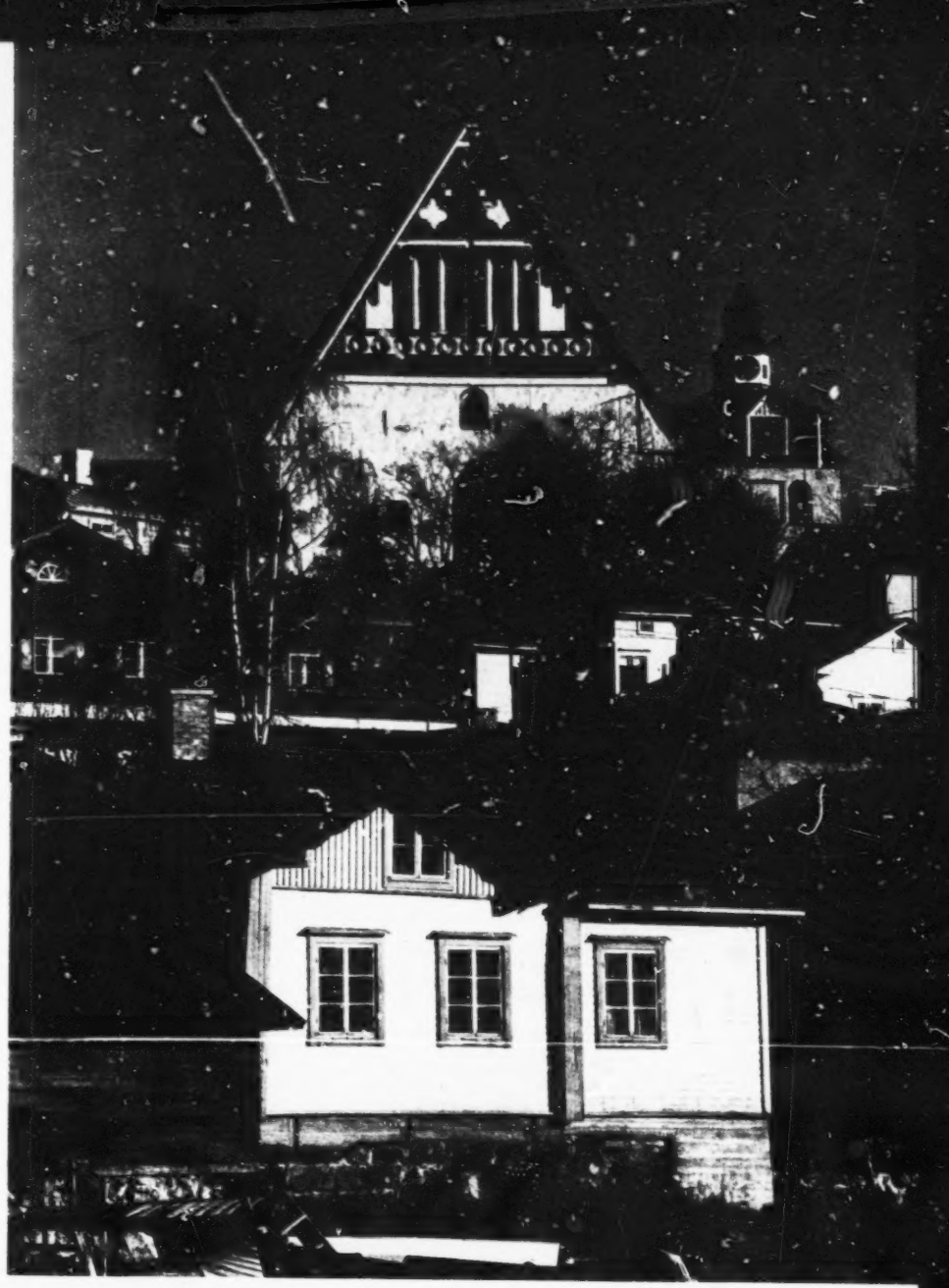
It is forbidden to operate a motor vehicle after **any** consumption of alcohol. Laws to this effect are explicit and strict; penalties are severe.

Local

Helsinki offers excellent bus and tram service. Taxis, readily available at taxi-stands throughout the city, are obtained by calling the widely publicized numbers for these taxi centers. Certain suburbs are efficiently served by commuter trains. A subway network is under construction, a portion of which has recently been opened to suburbs in the east.

Regional

The Finnish State Railways has a vast operating track (9,000 km.), with links to Sweden and the USSR. Finland has 74,600 kilometers of public roads. Finnair Oy (with the state as major stockholder), maintains regular service to locales within Finland; major European capitals; and Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, and Montreal among cities on other continents. Most freight and passenger traffic is via sea. Harbors are kept open even during the coldest winter periods. Ferry links are available to Sweden, Germany, and the USSR on a regularly scheduled basis.



Finnish architecture has been noted for its achievements since the 18th century. The historical sections of Porvoo (right) and Loviisa (below) are east of Helsinki.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The government operates the domestic telegraph and most of the country's telephone services. The Embassy will assist new arrivals in obtaining telephones. A standard monthly charge is assessed in addition to a small additional charge for each local call. Direct dialing is available to many foreign locations. To call the US, dial 990-1 and the area code and number.

Mail and Pouch

Personnel at post use both APO and international mail facilities. APO mail is dispatched and received by air. Letters can take 5-10 working days, and

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Helsinki Cathedral is a dominant feature of the skyline.

packages 1–4 weeks. APO mail costs the same as current internal US rates. Parcels are limited to 70 pounds and 100 inches in length and girth. The APO address is:

Name
American Embassy
APO New York 09664

International airmail takes about 5 days from Helsinki to New York. Postal rates are more expensive. Official pouch facilities are not used for personal mail.

Radio and TV

Broadcasting is done by the monopoly of Oy Yleisradio Ab, the Finnish Broadcasting Company, 93% of whose shares are owned by the state. Broadcasting is financed with funds from television license fees collected annually, which are issued free of charge to Embassy employees. A fair selection of musical programs is available throughout the day on Finnish AM and FM radio, but bring audio equipment and an assortment of records and/or tapes for your personal enjoyment. With a shortwave radio you can receive VOA and BBC transmissions.

Two television channels operate during the afternoon and evening. Some foreign programs (including American, British, and Canadian) are offered. These foreign programs are broadcast in the original language with Finnish subtitles. Finnish TV has the same technical standards as the FRG. It is advisable to obtain a television set with the proper technical standards in Finland or through the post exchange in Germany. Private cable television service is available at various locations within the city of Helsinki. It offers a wide selection of movies and serials.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The first Finnish newspaper was printed in 1776. Now 55 newspapers are published at least four times per week; 8 of them are in Swedish. The biggest newspaper is the *Helsingin Sanomat*, with a circulation of about 393,000. Some 1,500 periodicals are published in Finland annually.

Time, Newsweek, and the *International Herald Tribune* are sold locally, though the *Herald Tribune* arrives 1–2 days after publication. Other English-language newspapers (usually from England) and English-language books can be obtained at the main train station, in lobbies of larger hotels, and at the two principal bookstores. A good selection of other foreign-language books and magazines can be found at the two main bookstores. All imported publications are more expensive than in the country of origin.

Magazine subscriptions and book-club selections can be received through APO.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Finnish medical standards are high. Most physicians are educated at the University of Helsinki, and many study or do research abroad as well. Many doctors speak English.

Hospitals are modern and well equipped and the treatment is good. Though eye doctors are available, opticians can fill most prescriptions promptly. Dentists are competent, and orthodontic treatment is available. The Embassy Administrative Section has a listing of area hospitals and doctors who have been recommended by other personnel. The regional medical officer assigned to Moscow makes periodic visits to Helsinki for consultations on any medical problem.

Most medicines are available locally at a reasonable state-controlled price. They may not, however, be the same compositions or brand names prescribed by US physicians. Bring a supply of medicine you know you will need. You will then have time to consult with a doctor to determine the proper Finnish equivalent.

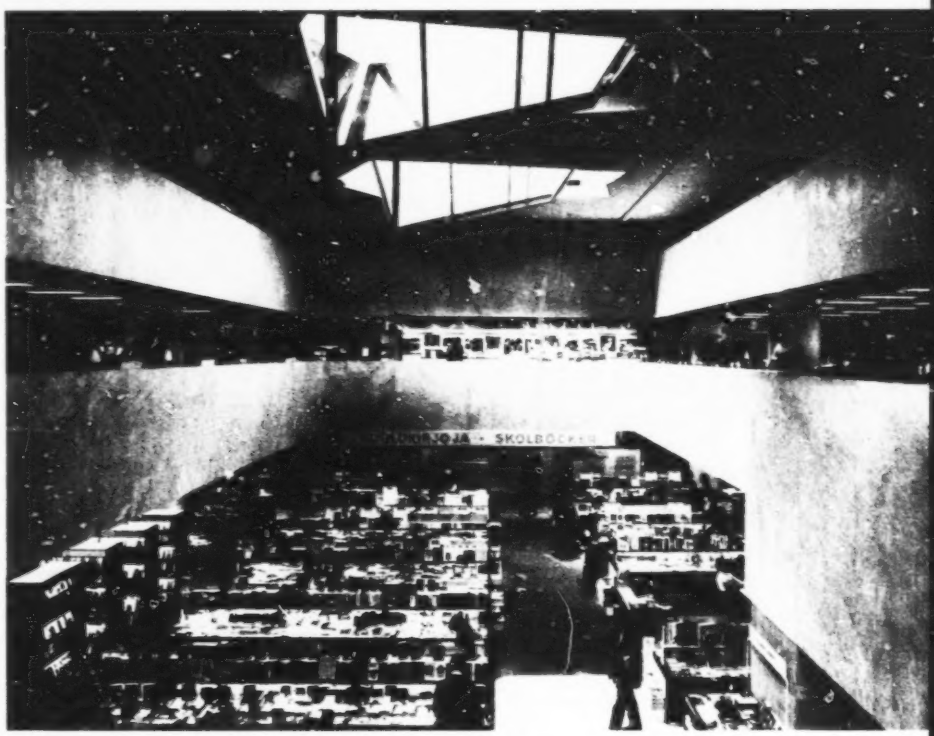
Community Health

The general level of community sanitation is high. Public cleanliness and controls are adequate to prevent serious outbreaks of disease. Helsinki water is dependable but not fluoridated; fluoride tablets are available for children if desired. The sanitation standards and safety of locally purchased goods are comparable to those in the US. Sewage and garbage arrangements are excellent.

Helsinki's winter is cold and long and may aggravate conditions such as neuralgia, rheumatism, and sinus disorders.

Preventive Measures

At least 2 months prior to departure for Finland, ascertain what current inoculations and vaccinations are required. As long periods pass without much sunshine, vitamins for the whole family are recommended.



Designed by Alvar Aalto, the Academic Bookstore is one of the best in northern Europe.

Employment for Spouses and Dependents

Employment opportunities at the Embassy for spouses and dependents are rare. At present, two part-time positions are filled by spouses—the Country Store manager and the Embassy Association manager. These positions require some knowledge of basic bookkeeping and accounting. As these positions become available, notices are circulated within the Embassy community with the Embassy Association Board awarding the positions appropriately.

Finding employment locally is difficult and opportunities are limited; but, it has been done. Once a spouse or dependent secures a written offer of employment, the Embassy Administrative Section will assist in obtaining a work permit from the Foreign Ministry which is usually granted. All dependents working locally are subject to Finnish taxes on income earned and will give up diplomatic privileges and immunities while actually "on the job."

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HELSINKI

1. City Tourist Office
2. Railway Station
3. Helsinki Congress Bureau
4. Bus Station
5. Air Terminal
6. Olympic Harbour
7. Passenger Harbour K5
8. Katajanokka Harbour
9. Senate Square, Cathedral
10. Market Square (Ferry to Suomenlinna)
11. Pohjoisranta (Ferry to Korkeasaari)
12. Finnish National Theatre
13. Swedish Theatre
14. Finnish National Opera
15. Art Museum of the Ateneum
16. Main Post Office
17. Parliament House
18. National Museum
19. City Museum
20. Finlandia Hall
21. House of Culture
22. City Theatre
23. Linnanmaki Amusement Park, Peacock Theatre
24. Uspensky Cathedral
25. Temppeliaukio Church
26. Olympic Stadium, Swinning Stadium
27. Ice Rink
28. Sibelius Monument
29. Helsinki International Fair Center
30. American Embassy
31. USICA

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American Embassy

Helsinki

Helsinki, capital and principal city, is a Baltic port on Finland's southern coast. It is a modern city; yet, it has areas which give a genuine and comprehensive picture of the atmosphere and architecture of the past.

Helsinki was founded in 1550 by Swedish King Gustav Vasa. Great fires destroyed the old wooden Helsinki many times, but it was always rebuilt. The massive walls of the Suomenlinna island fortress date from the 18th century. Helsinki became Finland's capital in 1812. Many of the city's historically interesting sights date from the beginning of the 19th century, when the administrative center was built around Senate Square. The cathedral, the university, and the Government Palace, for example, are among the finest architectural achievements of Helsinki. It has been said of the Helsinki of the Empire period that it was the last European city designed as an entity and created as a work of art. The historic Senate Square is one of the most remarkable achievements of neoclassicism at its height.

Helsinki today has a modern look, with some buildings designed by internationally known contemporary Finnish architects Eliel Saarinen and Alvar Aalto. In planning new areas and developing old ones, the aim has been to make the city a balanced whole with several regional centers, each with its own schools, sport fields, libraries, and shopping centers. The idea is to combine the advantages of urban living with those of rural life. Half a million people reside in the city, which is the administrative, cultural, commercial, and industrial center of Finland. Including suburbs, the population of Greater Helsinki is over 800,000.

Helsinki has many points of interest: One of the most popular is the harbor area and the Market Square, where the Havis Amanda fountain symbolizes Helsinki rising out of the waves. Other attractions include: the Olympic Stadium (site of the 1952 summer games), the Sibelius monument, the "Church in the Rock," Finlandia Hall, the City Museum, the National Museum, and Seurasaari Island.

Helsinki, a modern city tinged with 19th century features, is Finland's administrative, cultural, commercial, and industrial center.

The Post and Its Administration

The Embassy residence, Chancery, and Chancery annex occupy a large tract at Itainen Puistotie 14, overlooking the entrance to Helsinki's South Harbor. The residence and Chancery are in a Georgian red-brick building designed by an American architect and constructed in the late 1930s. A four-story converted apartment building at Itainen Puistotie 14B, acquired in 1947, houses the Consular, Commercial, and Administrative Sections; Defense Attache Office (DAO); Embassy Club; and the Marine Security Guard Detachment. Limited laundry facilities are available in the annex basement.

USIS offices are in the center of the city on the fourth floor of an office building at Kaivokatu 10A. This building, across the street from Helsinki's central railway station, is about 2½ kilometers from the Embassy.

The Embassy switchboard is open 24 hours; the number is 171931. USIS offices may be reached through the Embassy switchboard, or directly during working hours by dialing 176630.

The Embassy is open to the public 5 days a week, excluding American and local holidays, between 8:30 am and 5 pm. Duty personnel are assigned on a weekly basis starting Fridays at 8:30 am and are on call during the entire week.

Upon arrival, new personnel are met by members of their section and/or their sponsors. The latter are designated by the Embassy, and will provide basic information and answer initial questions about life in Helsinki. Write to the administrative officer as soon as your assignment is firm giving family size, special requirements, if any, and travel plans so that suitable arrangements can be made.

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The main Chancery complex includes the Chancery, Chancery annex, and the Ambassador's residence.

State and USIS employees are paid biweekly for salary and allowances in US Treasury checks prepared by the Regional Finance Center in Paris. A pay lag of about 4 weeks may occur while pay cards are in transit from the former post to the Regional Finance Center.

Housing

Temporary Quarters

New arrivals stay in either a hotel or one of the Embassy's two transient apartments. The latter are furnished with basic necessities and are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. The Intercontinental Hotel in downtown Helsinki is widely used by the American staff. Rates are normally covered by the temporary lodging allowance. New arrivals should advise the Embassy of their travel plans as far in advance as possible in order to secure adequate hotel accommodations.

Permanent Housing

The Ambassador's residence is an attractive three-story, red-brick, Georgian-colonial style building, one wing of which is the main Chancery. The main floor has a dining room which seats 16 comfortably, living room, paneled library (with 60 feet of shelving), powder room and two lavatories, as well as a large kitchen and pantry complex. The second floor has a master bedroom with dressing room and bath, two other bedrooms with bath, and a small sitting room with bath. The third floor has three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a storage room, and a sitting room. Servants quarters are above the garage area and kitchen.

The house is tastefully furnished and fully supplied to meet all representational requirements. Appliances include two deep freezers, three refrigerators, a dishwasher, and an electric clothes washer. An Ambassador normally brings such personal items as decorative china, pictures (Art in Embassies program may be useful in decorating), vases, and art objects.

The DCM's home is located on the Baltic in the Helsinki suburb of Westend, about 11 kilometers from the Chancery. The house is basically on one level. The dining and living rooms are separated by drapes, and when combined offer a representational area of about 44 × 18 feet. Also included are a second living room, a study with fireplace, and a built-in desk and bookshelves. Other rooms include a master bedroom with bath, two smaller bedrooms, a powder room, large kitchen, pantry and breakfast room, and a cold storage room. A fully equipped laundry and additional storage rooms are in the basement.

A small guesthouse situated alongside the main building consists of a bedroom, bath, and sitting room and is ideal for a live-in couple. A two-car garage also houses a freezer and second refrigerator. A sauna house is on the shoreline. The house is fully furnished, but pictures, personal decorative objects, and bedding must be brought by the DCM.

Fully furnished government-leased quarters are available for all military personnel assigned to the DAO. Information concerning these quarters is available through the DAO, Helsinki or at the Defense Intelligence Agency (Attention AT-7).

The rest of the Embassy staff and DAO civilians are provided with unfurnished, government-leased quarters. Full shipment of household effects is authorized. Dwellings are normally described by the number of square meters (1 square meter equals about 10 square feet). Typically they average from 140–180 square meters for a family with two or more children depending on availability and representational responsibility. Helsinki itself is an apartment-living community, but some detached homes and rowhouses are available in the suburbs. The Embassy makes every effort to locate suitable housing for new personnel prior to their arrival at post. Occasionally this is impossible, and new arrivals can assist in this undertaking.

Furnishings

The Embassy has no furnishings available for staff members. Therefore, airfreight should contain blankets, towels, kitchen utensils, sleeping bags, etc., should new arrivals decide to move into permanent quarters before household effects are delivered.

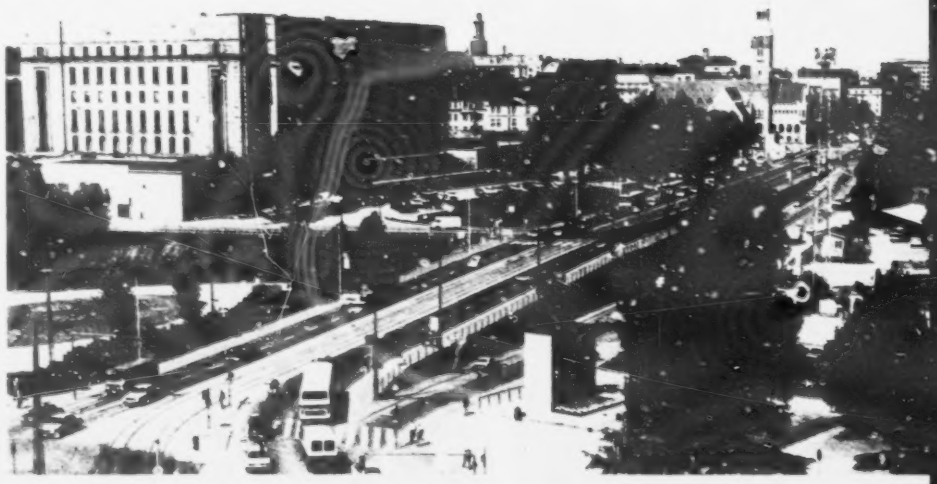
Traditional or modern furniture can be purchased in Helsinki or through free-port concerns in Denmark. The quality of furniture is good but prices can be higher than in the US. US-manufactured lamps can be used with Finnish bulbs and electrical connectors. Most quarters will require overhead light fixtures. Plug adapters and replacement plugs are available locally. In general, all furniture or furnishings can be obtained locally or, at somewhat cheaper prices, through US mail-order facilities.

Utilities and Equipment

Finnish homes and apartments are generally well heated. Electricity in Helsinki is 220v, 50-cycle, AC. Therefore, 110v appliances, radios, etc., require stepdown transformers which are available locally, but at higher than US prices.

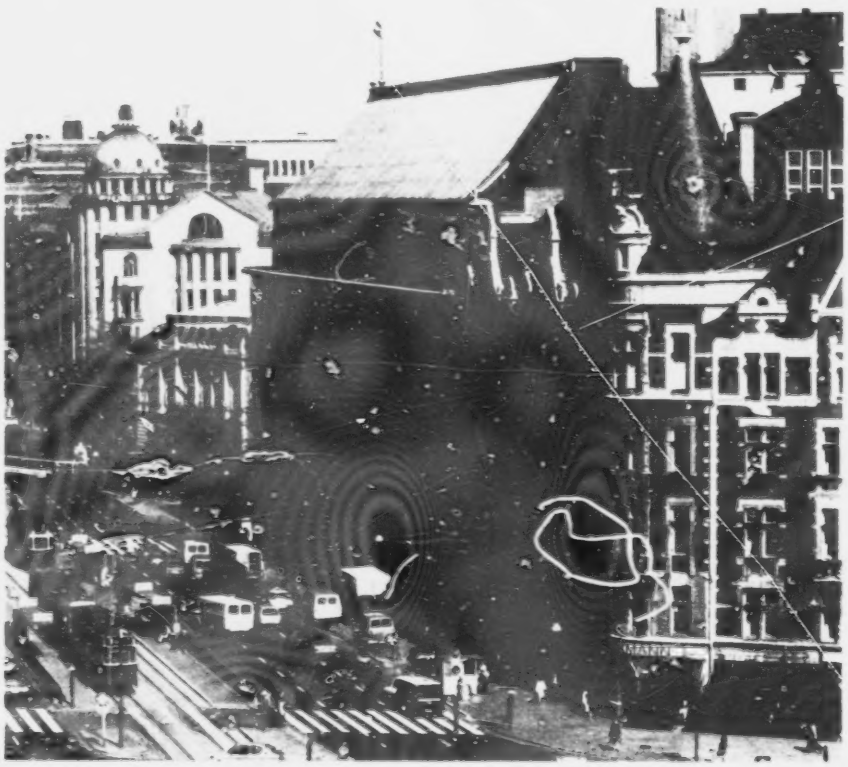
Finnish refrigerators and stoves are usually provided in rented apartments, but are small by American standards. Few personnel find it necessary to buy washers and dryers. The Embassy has recently purchased several for renters, and since in many instances apartments may not have adequate space or amperage for American appliances, postpone the purchase of these items until quarters have been found. A useful combination is the Hoover automatic washer and dryer, which is available locally and is relatively simple to install. Many personnel choose to buy 220v freezers here for storage of food purchased through the support flight. The Embassy has a limited number of refrigerator/freezers but no freezers.

An electric roaster oven is also useful since Finnish stoves have small ovens and often no facilities for broiling. Also bring an inexpensive oven thermometer. Electric dishwashers are useful, if space is available for them and you can afford the high cost of installation. Purchases can be made locally or ordered from elsewhere in Europe.



Parliament and the Mannerheim Monument stand in the heart of Helsinki.

Excellent bus and tram service are available, including service to Helsinki's main street and Stockmann's Department Store (far right).



Food

Most food items—even some specialty items—can be found in Helsinki. In addition to a plentiful supply of local fish, various cuts of beef, pork, lamb, reindeer, and local fowl are available. Eggs, milk, and milk products are excellent; some types of locally made cheese are very good. Because the selection of fresh fruit and vegetables is limited for much of the year, many items are imported, contributing to high costs. Many vegetables and especially berries, plentiful in summer, are frozen for year-round use. Wild mushrooms abound in late summer and fall, and mushroom-picking excursions are quite popular among Finns and foreigners who have studied the many species available. All locally purchased foodstuffs tend to be more expensive here than in the US.

Baby formulas and baby foods are available locally, though sometimes in limited supply.

Every other month the Embassy Association places group orders of dry goods and frozen food caselots with a military commissary in West Germany. Special cuts and quantities of frozen meats and PX items can also be ordered at the same time. When you place an order, 50% of the estimated cost is due, and a handling charge of about 19% is added to each order. Even so, these prices tend to be less than local prices. The Embassy Association is comprised of all American employees at the Embassy. A refundable deposit of $200 per family or $100 per single employee is re-

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The thriving marketplace on Market Square is open year round. The Orthodox Cathedral is in the background.

quired for membership, entitling you to use the Country Store facility and order from the commissary in Germany. Every member of the Association receives a computer printout listing all products available, and then fills out an order accordingly.

The small Country Store is located in the basement of the Embassy Annex. It is open for 4 hours, 1 day a week for the convenience of Association members and official temporary duty personnel. The Country Store manager is responsible for ordering stock from the commissary in Germany every 2 months as individuals do. The manager will, in turn, accept excess commissary items from individual orders. No fresh produce or frozen items are available at the Country Store. There is a slight markup on Country Store goods, but these items still remain below local costs.

Two ship's chandlers in Helsinki provide foodstuffs, nonalcoholic beverages, cigarettes, cosmetics, etc., at prices cheaper than in the local market. Each shipstore makes available to Embassy personnel its list of products and prices. Orders can be placed by phone with delivery the next day at the Embassy. The shipstores are very useful when ordering large quantities.

A variety of items may also be ordered through the free-port concerns in Denmark (Peter Justesen and Ostermann Peterson). Catalogs are available in the Embassy's General Services Section.

Clothing

When preparing your wardrobe for Helsinki, remember that winters are long and cold, falls/springs are rainy and cool, and summers are short. Layered outfits are ideal for differences in seasonal temperatures as well as the changes from indoors to outdoors. All clothing items can be purchased locally, but prices tend to be higher than in the US. Good sales occur locally during January and August, and it is worthwhile to shop at these times. Locally available winter outergarments and boots for men, women, and children are well made and ideally suited to the climate; they are generally worth the extra expense. All items can be purchased from the US through mail-order facilities. If you are difficult to fit with respect to shoe size or wearing apparel, bring extra items with you.

The DAO can provide specific uniform requirements.

Men. Fallweight suits can be worn throughout the year; winterweight suits are worn from October through May. Tuxedos are worn at the Marine Ball and other social functions during the year. You will need raingear, overcoats, overshoes, and boots. Fur hats, available locally, are popular and very warm. Civilian clothing is worn by military attaches during duty hours and at informal social functions. "Informal" on a dinner invitation usually means suit and tie.

Women. A useful wardrobe will include one long dress or skirt; several short cocktail/dinner dresses; sports attire; and casual dresses or skirts, sweaters, and blouses. Raingear and heavy winter coats are a must. Beautiful fur coats and leather coats are

available locally. Accessories depend on your own needs and tastes.

Civilian clothing is worn by military attaches during duty hours and at informal social functions.

Children. Warm, water resistant winter snowsuits and boots are a must. Rubber overalls readily purchased in local department stores are useful during both rainy and thawing periods. It may be advisable to have a second set of outdoor clothes for use during winter if your child actively participates in winter sports. A fallweight coat or jacket is necessary during spring and fall.

Supplies and Services

Supplies

Bring a good supply of toiletries, cosmetics, and home medicines. Local and European brands are available, but the cost is high. Some toiletries are available at the Embassy Country Store, but quantity and variety are limited.

Basic Services

Laundry and drycleaning are expensive. Bring your own cleaning compounds for spot removals. Certain neighborhood drycleaners offer "kilo pesu" or drycleaning of items with the charge based on weight. These items are not steam pressed. The cost is less than cleaning the items individually.

Domestic Help

Household servants are difficult to obtain. Some cleaning women are available on a part-time basis. Extra help for dinners and receptions can be obtained. You can place an ad in the local papers for domestic help or inquire among your Embassy colleagues for recommendations and names.

Religious Activities

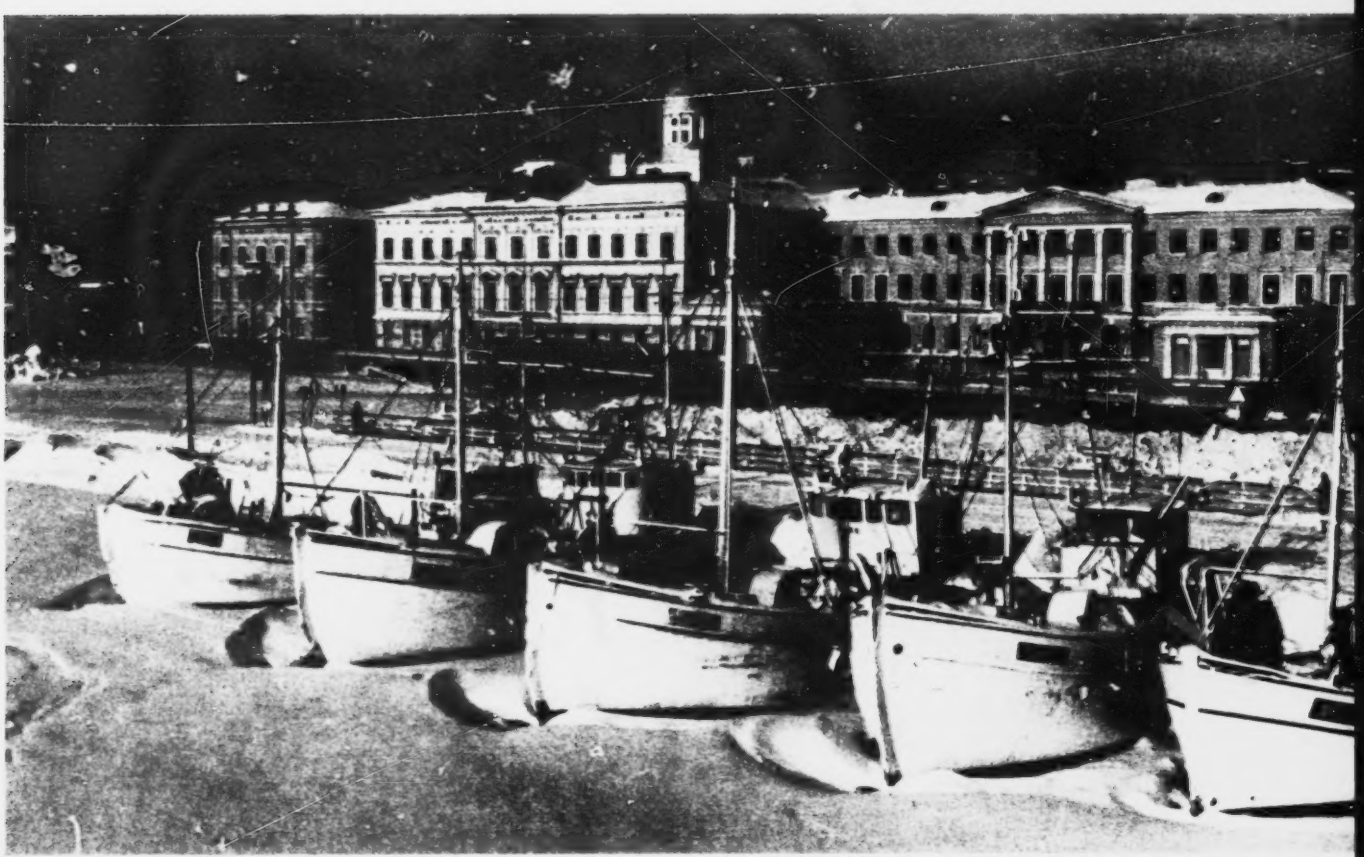
Anglican services are held in English at the Cathedral Chapel, Senate Square, on Sundays at 8:30 am and 10:30 am. Catholic services are held at St. Henrik's Church, Puistokatu 1, in English and Latin on Sundays at 10:00 am (service also on Sundays at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm), and at St. Mary's Church, Mantytie 2, on Sundays at 10:30 am. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints services are held at Marjaniementie 35 and Malipellonkuja 1. Evangelical services in English are held at the Temppeliaukio Church on Sundays at 3:00 pm. Jewish services are held at Malminkatu 26. Orthodox services are held at Uspensky Cathedral on Sundays at 10:00 am. Pentecostal services are held at Saalem Church, Nakinkatu 3.

Education

Dependent Education

At Post. The International School of Helsinki is operated as a private, nonprofit educational institution under a school board elected by the parents of the enrolled children. Several different nationalities are represented both in the school and on the nine-member

A fishing fleet is frozen in front of the Presidential Palace.



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bassy parents have sent their children to Swedish schools as an alternative to sending high school students away from post. The post education allowance will normally cover expenses for a private tutor. Local kindergartens are also available. Parents can obtain more specific information on arrival or by writing to the administrative officer.

Away From Post. The Defense Department school serving Finland is London Central High School in High Wycombe, England, which is a pleasant suburb located about halfway between downtown London and Oxford. Dependents of DOD personnel attend this school. Dependent children of State Department and USIS employees have also had favorable experiences at this boarding school for 9th to 12th grades. This school has an excellent athletic and social program. It is also the closest US-style school with full credits for high school graduation and college entrance.

Excellent cross-country trails are available in and around Helsinki. Pictured below is the start of the 75-kilometer Finlandia cross-country skiing event.

Under the post education allowance, State and USIS personnel may send their 7th- through 12th-grade dependents to private boarding schools in England, other European countries, or the US. Some boarding schools in the US offer special tuition arrangements for dependents of Embassy personnel. The Family Workshop at FSI has more information.

Special Educational Opportunities

In addition to the University of Helsinki, which is the largest university in the Nordic area, Helsinki has a technical institute and two schools in commerce and business administration; all are very good. Although courses in the English department may be taken at the university, language restrictions make it difficult for most students to carry a full academic course load.

The University of Helsinki offers excellent courses in Finnish for foreigners. Courses are taught at all levels of proficiency, during the day and after working hours. These courses provide an excellent opportunity to

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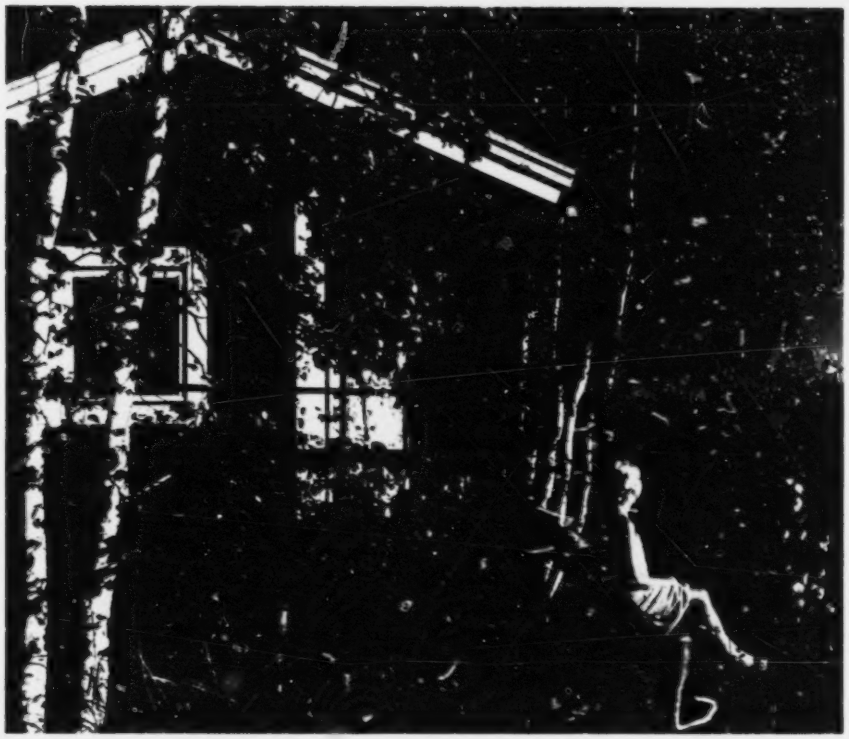


Summer cottages, usually situated on a lake or the sea, always have saunas.

learn Finnish and meet other foreigners.

Special educational opportunities are available for children with learning disabilities and the physically handicapped, but all instruction is either in Finnish or Swedish. None of the schools normally attended by Embassy dependents has such facilities. Families coming to the post with children who are unable to attend conventional schools should write to the administrative officer to ascertain what facilities are available in each individual case.

Post Orientation Program

In view of the post's small size, no formal orientation program has been established except during times of high personnel turnover. The post has established sponsor and "Welcome Wagon" programs, and all new arrivals will be assisted in obtaining suitable accommodations and in placing food orders, etc. New arrivals are also briefed regarding life at post and security practices.

Chiefs of sections assume responsibility for orienting employees as to US policy objectives. The Embassy schedules Finnish-language training throughout the year for employees and their dependents.

Recreation and Social Life

The sauna is a national institution in Finland. Finns normally take a sauna once a week, and it is a custom that most Americans quickly learn to enjoy. Saunas are particularly enjoyable after physical exercise, especially cross-country skiing, and as a means of socializing, although mixed saunas are not customary.

The purpose of taking a sauna is to completely cleanse the body by undergoing great changes in temperature. After the heat of the sauna you either shower or swim in a pool or lake or plunge through a hole in the ice. After a sauna, a cold beer or soda is a necessary thirst quencher. Most Finnish apartment buildings include saunas, and their residents have regular sauna evenings. Almost all houses have saunas, some with pools. Summer houses, although quite modest, all have a sauna, usually on a lake or the sea.

Sports

Finland first rose to prominence in sports at the 1912 Olympics, where it took first place in wrestling and second place in track and field. In succeeding years Finland has become famous for long-distance running, ski jumping, speed skating, and target shooting. Sports unique to Finland are bandy, a form of ice hockey, and pesapallo, a game vaguely resembling American baseball. Soccer, hockey, and basketball are popular spectator sports.

From the first of June until late August, daylight hours are long and outdoor activities such as boating, sailing, bathing, swimming, hiking, picnicking, and motor trips may be enjoyed in the immediate vicinity of Helsinki.

The time for golf and outdoor tennis is relatively short. Helsinki has two 18-hole golf courses and a few excellent outdoor clay tennis courts as well as several indoor year-round tennis courts. It is not easy to become a member of the golf clubs, and tennis courts must usually be booked in advance and sometimes at inconvenient hours.

Squash is becoming popular. Court time is booked on a half-hour basis. Cycling possibilities are excellent in the Helsinki suburbs. Trails for jogging and walking abound. Boating begins in May and extends into September. Swimming at the several municipal beaches and outside pools is popular for about 2 months in the summer. Swimming is possible year round at several indoor pools.

Winter sports include skiing and skating. Excellent trails for cross-country skiing are available in and around the city, many of which are lit for evening use. Several smaller towns within a few hours' ride offer good weekend skiing; spring skiing trips to Lapland are popular. Downhill skiing is popular, but facilities are limited. Several small hills are located near Helsinki, but the better locations are farther north. Air charter trips to the Alps are plentiful. The city has many good outdoor skating rinks and some indoor rinks. Figure skating lessons are available.

Several horseback riding schools are located in Helsinki and the immediate vicinity. The city has one indoor riding hall.

Salmon fishing is found in northern Lapland. Icefishing is quite popular throughout Finland. Game hunting is possible but on a limited basis.

Ten-pin bowling is popular in Finland. The Embassy has an active bowling league which competes Saturday mornings for about 9 months of the year.

With the exception of cross-country skiing equipment, buy sports equipment in the US. Sports clothing and equipment used in Finland are similar to those used in the US but can be more expensive.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Fine museums, parks, and playgrounds are located throughout the city. A zoo on an island just outside Helsinki harbor is open all year. Marvelous outdoor recreation and touring opportunities are plentiful throughout Finland, particularly Lapland and the lake district.

Lapland—the land of the midnight sun, northern lights, and reindeer—is the northernmost province of Finland. The principal towns are Kemi and Rovaniemi, both accessible by air (2 hours) and rail (9 hours) and about 800 kilometers from Helsinki. The overnight train with space for cars is a popular way to get to Rovaniemi, a transit point to the tourist and resort areas of Pallastunturi, Kilpisjarvi, and Inari farther north. You can also drive north into Norway and view the fiords. Lapland is especially popular in early April, when days are longer and skiing excellent; for midsummer's night to view the fires and festivities; and in September when the leaves change colors.

The lake district, comprising most of south-east central Finland, provides excellent opportunities for scenic travel by car and steamer ship. A wood-burning steamer offers an unusually scenic 12-hour trip from Savonlinna to Kuopio. The Olavinlinna Castle, dating back to 1475, is the site of an open opera festival in Savonlinna in July.

Day trips to Turku, Hanko, and Porvoo are popular: The Turku Cathedral and Castle both date from the 13th century, and the open-air handicrafts museum is a popular attraction in summer. Turku is located 2½ hours west of Helsinki by car. Hanko is a coastal city 2 hours west of Helsinki by car. It is one of the best Finnish saltwater bathing resorts during July and August. En route to Hanko is Tammisaari, a charming seaside town with narrow lanes bordered by Empire-style wooden houses. Porvoo is an idyllic old coastal town 1 hour from Helsinki by car. It was the home of Runeberg, the Finnish poet, and is the site of an ancient granite cathedral.

A tour in Helsinki provides excellent opportunities to travel to Sweden and the USSR. Two shipping lines have overnight service between Stockholm and Helsinki. Ships also travel to Tallinn and Travemunde. Daily flights are available on Finnair or Aeroflot, and daily trains service Leningrad and Moscow. All excursions to the USSR require a Soviet visa. Since accommodations must be booked before a visa is issued, have a travel agent in Helsinki make all arrangements. Visa processing takes from 10 days to 2 weeks. The Embassy can request visas from the Soviet Embassy in Helsinki by diplomatic note.

Entertainment

Since its designation as the nation's capital in 1812, Helsinki has naturally developed into a cultural center. Many of Finland's most important museums are located here. The largest is the National Museum, with its extensive prehistoric, historic, and ethnographic collections. The largest art museum is the Art Museum of the Athenaeum, located across the street from the railroad station. It contains Finnish art from the 18th century to the present, and foreign works of art. Occasionally, large foreign exhibitions are shown there. The Art Collections of the City of Helsinki and the Amos Anderson Museum of Art are also noted museums which often have exhibitions, in addition to their regular collections.

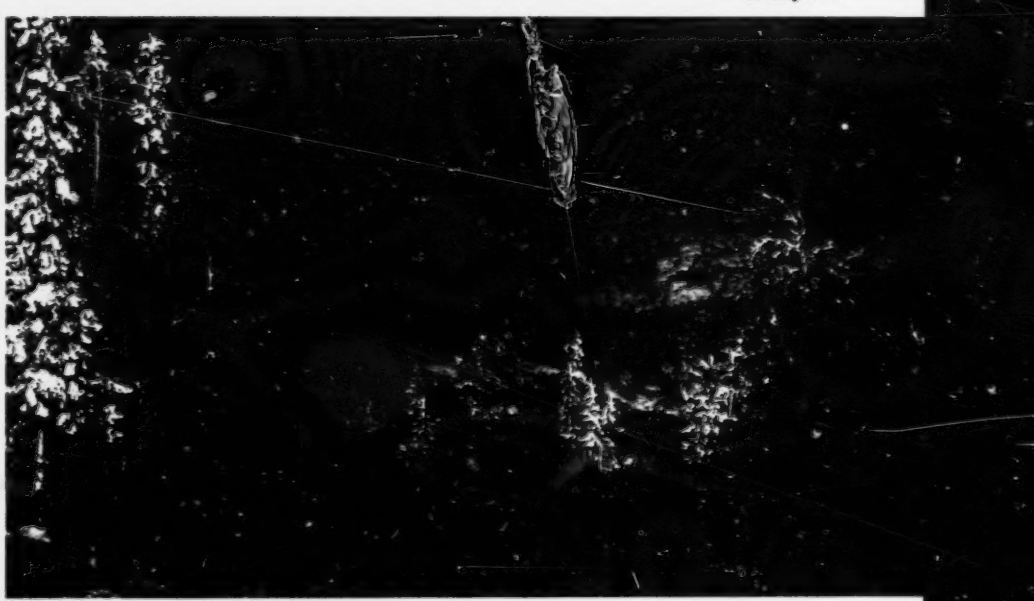
Many good movie theaters in the city and suburbs offer the latest American, British, Italian, French, German, and other films in their original versions as well as locally produced films in Finnish. Movies are at scheduled hours. Strict regulations prevent children from attending movies featuring violence whether accompanied by parents or not.

Helsinki has two permanent symphony orchestras (the Helsinki Philharmonic and the Radio Symphony Orchestra), the National Opera with both opera and ballet companies, and the government-sponsored National Theater. Concerts and recitals are performed in the reknowned Finlandia Hall, the Taivallahti Church, the Sibelius Academy, and the House of Nobility, among others, making for a rich and varied musical life. Summers feature noted Finnish and international artists and musicians throughout Finland. Included are the Kuopio Dance and Music Festival in June, the Jyvaskyla Arts Festival, the Savonlinna Opera Festival, the Pori Jazz Festival, the Turku Music Festival, the Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival, the Lahti International Organ Festival, the Tampere Theater Summer, and the Helsinki Festival.

Social Activities

The Embassy Women's Club meets once a month from September through May. Members pay annual dues. Officers are elected from the membership, and programs and activities are

A skier takes advantage of the short winter days in Lapland.



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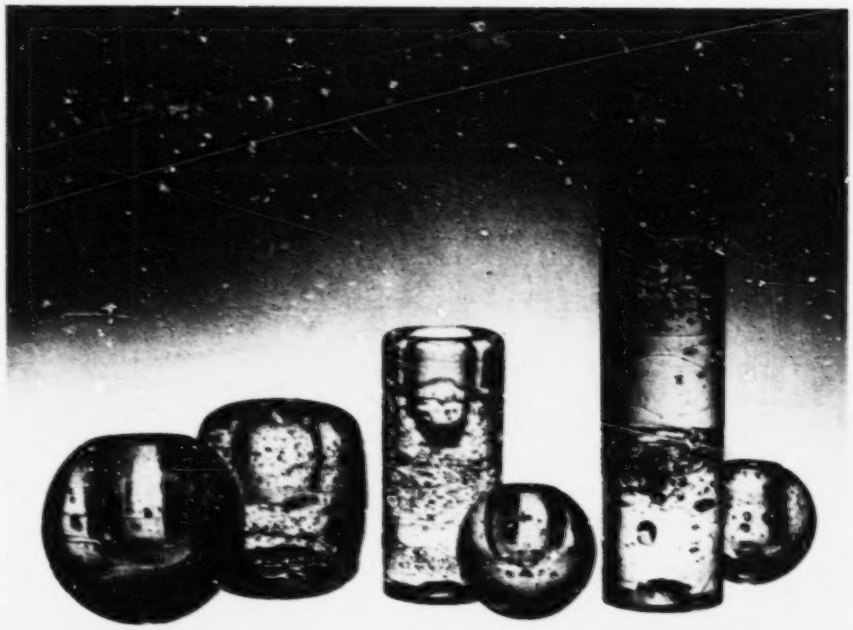
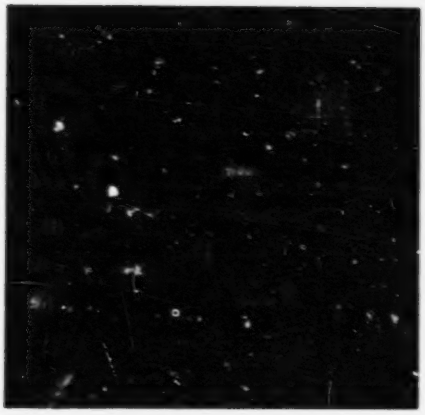


Iittala Glassworks are famous worldwide. Classic designs capture the atmosphere of Finland's clear, cold waters.



structured according to the desires and interests of the group. This organization sponsors parties for Embassy children and an occasional pot luck dinner for the American Embassy staff.

The American Women's Club was founded in 1969 by a group of Embassy wives and American women living in Finland. The membership has expanded over the years to include women of other nationalities who have an interest in American life. The group meets on the third Thursday of every month from September through May. Monthly tours to points of interest are arranged, and a variety of interest groups are maintained. Members pay annual dues established by the club.

The Finnish-American Society (Helsinki Chapter) is a cultural/social organization linked to the League of Finnish American Societies (LFAS), with some 52,000 members throughout Finland. The group sponsors many cultural and social activities throughout the year. A special Ladies' Club and a Men's Club meet on a monthly basis. All Americans may join for a nominal fee. Other clubs include the Finnish-American Chamber of Commerce, the Club of '32, Consular Corps, Diplomatic Club, Rotary, Lions, etc.

Official Functions

Nature of Functions

Social life in Helsinki, apart from official dinners and receptions, is basically what you make it. Cocktail parties, dinners, informal gatherings, coffees, and card parties can all be part of your social calendar. Embassy officers and their spouses might find the pace demanding for a good part of the year, but July/August often provide a respite from a busy schedule.

Standards of Social Conduct

In Finland both men and women shake hands on meeting each other. Children also shake hands with adults and should not be excluded from the ceremony. Punctuality is a must. Guests are expected to arrive within 5 minutes of the stated arrival time for a dinner party.

When visiting a Finnish home, it is the custom to take flowers to the hostess or to send flowers preceding or following the visit. Flowers are usually given to the hostess unwrapped and in numbers of 3, 5, or 7. In lieu of flowers other small gifts may also be presented.

At a dinner party it is customary for the host to make the welcoming speech as soon as the first course is served and all the wine glasses filled. No one touches his or her glass until this ritual has been performed. The honored guest makes a toast and thanks the host and hostess as soon as the dessert wine or dessert has been served.

Finns observe the name day as well as the birthday of close friends, relatives, and prominent people personally known. The really important birthday celebrations are the 50th and 60th which are recognized by extending best wishes personally, by phone or telegram, or by sending flowers. Names of the day are published in local newspapers.

A 15% service charge is included in all restaurant bills. There is no need to tip additionally. Bellhops, hatcheckers, and door attendants are given a minimum of FIM 3 tip for their services. A posted charge is usually paid to coatroom attendants in most public places such as restaurants or concert halls, theaters, and the like.

Calling cards are necessary only for personnel on the diplomatic list. Bring at least 100 officer's cards and 100 "Mr. and Mrs." cards for personal and professional purposes. Printed calling cards and invitations are acceptable and can be easily obtained locally. Because prices are high for such items, you may want to bring raised-print cards from the US.

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Notes For Travelers

Getting to the Post

Travelers should make sure their routings comply with the Fly America Act. Northwest Airlines will probably be the authorized routing. Under current Fly America regulations (check to be sure) you have the option of taking the ferry boat from Stockholm to Helsinki. It is a delightful way to arrive in Helsinki.

Use unaccompanied airfreight to ship a wardrobe of suitable clothing, bedding, towels, and kitchen equipment needed to set up housekeeping until the arrival of household effects.

Shipments by air average 2–4 weeks. Household effects arriving by sea from the US take 4–6 weeks minimum in good weather. On occasion, ice conditions delay arrivals.

At least five photos (1¾" × 1½") of each adult family member are required on arrival. Do not ship them in airfreight.

Summer homes on the archipelago near Turku.

Customs, Duties, and Passage

Customs and Duties

The Embassy's General Services Section clears unaccompanied baggage. Household and personal effects of officers on the diplomatic list are cleared without inspection. Although effects of nondiplomatic personnel are legally subject to inspection, this right is not generally exercised by customs authorities. No special charges, quotas, restrictions, waivers, or exemptions are levied other than those cited above.

All personnel are granted free entry of personal and household effects. All personnel may have their shipments arrive duty free at any time during their tour.

Duty-free cigarettes, food, staples, and toiletries may be purchased from a ship's chandler located in Helsinki.

Parcel post packages sent through Finnish postal facilities are subject to customs clearance before release to the Embassy.

No restrictions are placed on the amount of currency, travelers checks, bank drafts, letters of credit, etc., that can be imported into Finland. But no more than FIM 5,000 may be exported from the country without a Bank of Finland license. It is illegal to take FIM 500 bills out of the country.

All Americans, except for Marine Security Guards other than the NCOIC, may import one automobile duty free.

Passage

A visa is not necessary for entry into Finland. Americans planning to remain in Finland more than 90 days must obtain a residence permit after arrival.

Diplomatic members desiring to bring domestic help from abroad may obtain a work permit for the domestic immediately after their arrival. With the exception of Scandinavian citizens, a nominal Finnmark fee (depending on nationality) is required to obtain a residence permit and work permit. The renewable work permit is valid for 1 year.

No requirements govern movement of travelers, personal baggage, or vehicles when arriving in Finland by car. A valid passport, US or foreign auto registration certifying vehicle ownership, and an international "Green Card" (liability insurance) are the only travel documents required. For automobile safety modifications required under Finnish law, see Transportation.

Personnel traveling to Finland are not required to have a smallpox inoculation certificate.

Pets

Quarantine restrictions are applicable to all pets, including birds. The period of quarantine is 4 months, subject to change without notice, except for animals from Sweden and Norway. All personnel with pets should write to the administrative officer immediately upon receiving notification of assign-

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ment to Helsinki to reserve space (not always available) in a quarantine kennel, to determine what quarantine restrictions are in force, and to obtain an import license.

The Embassy needs to know the exact time of arrival of the pet and whether it is arriving as airfreight or accompanied baggage. Pets should not arrive on weekends or Finnish holidays. Kennel personnel will meet and transport the pet to the kennel. Personnel bringing a dog (please provide information on type and size) must produce current rabies and distemper inoculation certificates, and a health certificate.

A Finnish veterinarian checks all animals at the point of arrival, and during quarantine a veterinarian will inspect the pet once a week. Kennels are near Helsinki and visits are permitted during quarantine. The general services officer can provide current fees for quarantine and veterinary services.

Firearms and Ammunition

Firearms and ammunition may be shipped (but not mailed) to post without an export license provided they are consigned to US personnel for their personal use and not for resale. Prior approval of the Chief of Mission is not necessary provided post is given advance notification.

To take additional firearms and ammunition into the country, you must seek permission of the Chief of Mission in advance. In shipping additional firearms and ammunition from the US, you must forward copies of your exchange of correspondence with the Chief of Mission, along with a completed Form DSP-5 (export application), to Office of Munitions Control (PM/MC), Department of State, Washington, DC 20520. The application should include all firearms and ammunition to be shipped to post. The export license issued by PM/MC must be given at time of shipment to the US Despatch Agent who, in turn, will surrender it and other shipping documents to US Customs.

If you receive permission from your next Chief of Mission to ship firearms and ammunition in excess of those prescribed, and will ship them between foreign countries only, no license is necessary from PM/MC.

No Department of State license will be issued if you ship only shotguns (with barrels 18 inches and over in length) and shotgun ammunition not in excess of the quantities listed. You must, however, comply with the Chief of Mission's determination and with export regulations of the Office of Export Control, US Department of Commerce.

Local requirements for hunting licenses are handled by the police. The Embassy can assist you in obtaining both a license to carry a gun and a hunting license from the police department in the section handling licensing. Fishing licenses are also required; charges are modest.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The unit of Finnish currency, the "markka" or Finnmark (FIM), has a floating exchange rate. Bank notes are in denominations of 5, 10, 50, 100, and 500 marks; coins are in denominations of 5, 10, 20, and 50 pennies, and 1 and 5 marks. The Bank of Finland establishes the rate of exchange daily. During 1981-82 the rate averaged US$1 = FIM 4.

Personal dollar checking accounts in US banks are useful to pay for goods bought outside Finland as well as to buy Finnmarks locally. Travelers checks may be purchased at local banks for dollars or dollar instruments. A local Finnmark checking account can also be useful, although payment of local bills is accomplished easily through banks and post offices. Dollars are not accepted by most vendors.

Finland uses the metric system.

Market Square in front of City Hall, Helsinki.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

Finnish currency regulations are reasonable, and clearance formalities upon arrival are not demanding. Personnel may bring Finnish marks, foreign currencies, and other means of payment (e.g., travelers checks) in an unlimited amount. New arrivals should bring some US dollars for purchasing US postage from the APO and for future travel outside Finland.

The Embassy Budget and Fiscal Office provides accommodation facilities for exchanging dollars/dollar instruments to Finnmarks, or employees may exchange dollars into Finnmarks at any authorized Finnish source (banks, Stockmann's Department Store, hotels, etc.). These authorized sources will accept US currency, foreign currencies, and travelers checks

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for Finnmarks, and some banks will also accept the personal check of personnel accredited to the Embassy. The Budget and Fiscal Office has only a limited amount of US currency, and its disbursement is restricted by regulations to travel outside Finland and for purchase of stamps at the APO.

The importation, sale, or export of personal property, including cars of American employees, must be in accordance with the laws, regulations, and conventions of the host country. Personal property, including motor vehicles, brought to Finland by American employees must be for their bona fide personal use or that of their dependents and not with intent of sale or transfer. Autos purchased for shipment to post should be unostentatious and modestly equipped.

The employee can retain from the sale of personal property, including motor vehicles, only an amount equal to the cost plus any taxes and transportation fees paid.

Waters comprise nearly 10% of Finland's total area. Punkaharju (left) in eastern Finland is near the Soviet border. Water activities of all kinds (below) play a major role in Finnish life.

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The sale of personal property, including cars, to persons other than those with duty-free import privileges requires Embassy approval. Requests to sell shall be submitted in writing to the administrative officer for approval.

Recommended Reading

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

Finnish History and Politics

Jacobson, Max. *The Diplomacy of the Winter War*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1962.

———. *Finnish Neutrality*. Praeger: New York, 1969. Finnish foreign policy following World War II.

Klinge, Matti. *Sixty Years Independent Finland*. Otava: Helsinki, 1977. A concise outline of Finland's principal achievements.

Maude, George. *The Finnish Dilemma: Neutrality in the Shadow of Power*. Oxford University Press: New York, 1976.

Nousiainen, Jaakko. *The Finnish Political System*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1971.

Schwartz, Andrew J. *America and the Russo-Finnish War*. Public Affairs Press: Washington, DC, 1960. An account of U.S.-Finnish relations through the Winter and Continuation Wars.

Upton, Anthony. *The Finnish Revolution*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1981.

Vloyantes, John P. *Silk Glove Hegemony*. Kent State University Press: Kent, 1975. Finnish-Soviet relations, 1944–74.

Wuorinen, John. *A History of Finland*. Columbia University Press: New York, 1965. Perhaps the best overall survey of Finnish history, written in English.

Finnish Culture and Society

Bradley, David. *Lion Among Roses*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston: New York, 1965. Account of the experiences of an American family during a 2-year stay in Finland.

Finland: An Introduction. Sylvie Nickels, ed., et. al. A collection of articles on Finnish culture, politics, and economics. Last revised in 1977.

Kalevala. Francis Peabody Magnoun, Jr., trans. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1963. An excellent translation of Finland's epic poem.

Kolehmainen, John. *Epic of the North*. A study of *Kalevala*.

Linna, Vaino. *The Unknown Soldier*.

Nicol, Gladys. *Finland*. Hastings: New York, 1975.

Smith, John Bolton. *The Golden Age of Finnish Art*. Otava: Helsinki, 1975.

Local Holidays

New Year's Day	Jan. 1
Epiphany	Sat. between Jan. 6 and 12
Good Friday	Fri. before Easter
Easter Monday	Mon. after Easter
May Day	May 1
Ascension Day	Sat. about 40 days after Easter
Whitsun Eve	Sat. before Whit Sunday
Midsummer's Eve	Fri. preceding Midsummer's Day
Midsummer's Day	Sat. closest to June 25
All Saints Day	Sat. closest to Nov. 1
Independence Day	Dec. 6
Christmas Eve	Dec. 24
Christmas Day	Dec. 25
Boxing Day	Dec. 26

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